



city of
greenville

News Release

SMALL CHANGE MAKES BIG IMPACT ON CONSERVATION EFFORTS

(Greenville SC) The Greenville Zoo recently donated \$40,000, which was raised this past year through its Quarters for Conservation program, to help fund field research projects in South Carolina and around the globe. Of the four projects that zoo guests were able to vote for, the project that received the most votes was the Orangutan Foundation International, which works to protect the rainforest habitat for the orangutans in Borneo and rehabilitate rescued and orphaned orangutans. The project that received the second highest number of votes was the Furman Cougar project, which is led by a team of researchers from Furman University that is monitoring mountain lion populations in New Mexico and Arizona. The third highest vote-getter was a project to protect Philippine crocodiles, which are extremely endangered, with only a few hundred remaining in the wild. The project is also unique in that efforts to protect the crocodiles' habitat also protect clean water sources for nearby villages. And finally, the fourth project to receive funds protects the Owston's civet, a small endangered carnivore found only in Asia, whose populations are declining due primarily to habitat loss.

Additionally, last spring, Brushy Creek Elementary celebrated "Green Week" by collecting coins and donated over \$700 to the Orangutan Foundation International through the Greenville Zoo. As a token of appreciation, Greenville Zoo staff presented a painting created by Chelsea, the zoo's female orangutan, to Principal Charles Davis, Jr. at a City Council meeting.

According to Dr. Heather Miller, the Greenville Zoo's deputy administrator for animal health, the zoo has collected over \$100,000 for conservation efforts in the last three years through the Quarters for Conservation program. "The conservation projects change every year and the amount that each project receives is directly related to the number of "votes" it receives from our zoo guests," said Miller. "Each time you visit the zoo, 25 cents from your admission fee go directly into a restricted fund for conservation, and in return, you receive a token that you can use to vote for the conservation project that inspires you." In addition to funding from the general admission fee, the

zoo also allocates \$3.00 from each annual membership fee to the conservation fund. Each year, 50% of the funds collected through the program goes directly to the four projects. The remaining funds are used to support the Greenville Zoo Conservation Fund, which provides small grants to not-for-profit organizations, individuals and educational entities with shared interests in conservation and research, and a small percentage is set aside for on-site conservation, research and administration.

Zoo guests now have four new projects to cast their votes for. The Greenville Zoo's 2013-2014 Quarters for Conservation projects are: the *Giant Armadillo Project*, the *Silvery Gibbon Project*, *Partners for Reptile and Amphibian Conservation* and the *Madagascar Fauna Project*. Descriptions of the projects are available on the zoo's web site at <http://www.greenvillezoo.com/QuartersforConservation.aspx>.

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About the Greenville Zoo:

Accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA), the Greenville Zoo is rated one of the best tourist attractions in South Carolina, attracting over 270,000 people annually. Operated by the City of Greenville, the 14-acre facility features wildlife from around the world including giraffes, monkeys, giant tortoises and elephants. Visitors can also enjoy one of the zoo's most popular exhibits, the Reptile Building, which is home to a variety of lizards, frogs, turtles and snakes.

The Greenville Zoo is open seven days a week, except on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Zoo entry ticket sales close at 4:15 p.m. For more information about the Greenville Zoo, visit greenvillezoo.com. Follow the zoo on Facebook at facebook.com/greenvillezoo and Twitter at twitter.com/greenvillezoo.

Contact: Crystal Rose
Zoo Business Administrator
(864) 467-4311
crose@greenvillesc.gov